

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07

NRC-05 ERDA-05 SIL-01 LAB-04 OC-06 CCO-00 EB-07 /090 W
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P 300403Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1914

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

CNO WASHDC PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

CINCPACFLT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 3246

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MNUC, NZ

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S.S. TRUXTUN VISIT TO WELLINGTON

REF: WELLINGTON 3219

1. SUMMARY: MOST DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENT CONNECTED WITH U.S.S. TRUXTUN VISIT HAS BEEN CUTTING OF GUY WIRE ON TRANSMITTING ANTENNA AT US NAVY COMMUNICATIONS UNIT IN CHRISTCHURCH, CAUSING ANTENNA TO COLLAPSE. IN SPITE OF THIS GESTURE OF OPPOSITION TO VISIT, WELCOME BY NEW ZEALANDERS OF TRUXTUN AND ITS CREW HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING. WATERSIDERS BOYCOTT OF WELLINGTON HARBOUR BECAUSE OF TRUXTUN VISIT HAS STOPPED MOVEMENT OF COOK STRAIT FERRIES BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH ISLANDS, CREATING A SITUATION OF POSSIBLE SHOWDOWN BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND WATERSIDERS UNION. END OF SUMMARY.

2. IN EARLY MORNING HOURS OF AUGUST 28 UNKNOWN PERSONS CUT A GUY WIRE ON A TRANSMITTING ANTENNA USED BY THE US NAVY AT CHRISTCHURCH IN APPARENT PROTEST AGAINST TRUXTUN VISIT. ANTENNA TOPPLED TO GROUND. ANTENNA USED ALMOST
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EXCLUSIVELY FOR COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN OPERATION DEEPFREEZE

BASE AT CHRISTCHURCH AND ANTARCTICA. ALTERNATIVE TRANSMITTING ANTENNAS ARE AVAILABLE AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH ANTARCTICA ARE NOT DISRUPTED. POLICE SUSPICIONS ARE CENTERED ON A GROUP CALLED "COMMITTEE AGAINST FOREIGN CONTROL IN NEW ZEALAND" AS PERPETRATORS OF THE GUY WIRE INCIDENT. LOCAL INTELLIGENCE/SECURITY OFFICIALS ARE CONFIDENT OF THEIR CAPABILITY TO CONTROL THIS ORGANIZATION BUT CUTTING OF GUY WIRE HAS INCREASED POLICE CONCERN OVER HOW FAR GROUP MAY BE PREPARED TO CARRY ITS PROTEST.

3. DEMONSTRATORS AT DOCKSIDE HAVE REMAINED RELATIVELY FEW AND NON-VIOLENT ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF SOME ABUSIVE LANGUAGE USED AGAINST AMERICAN SAILORS. LATTER HAVE IGNORED TAUNTS AND NO UNTOWARD INCIDENTS INVOLVING NEW ZEALANDERS AND SAILORS HAVE OCCURRED. MEANWHILE, 1500 INVITATIONS FOR 500 CREWMEN HAVE BEEN FORTHCOMING IN "DIAL-A-SAILOR" PROGRAM. NEW ZEALAND HOSPITALITY HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING AND HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS FROM PRIME MINISTER DOWN HAVE ACCEPTED INVITATIONS TO VISIT/DINE ABOARD TRUXTUN.

4. POTENTIALLY THE MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE OF TRUXTUN VISIT HAS GROWN OUT OF WATERSIDERS BOYCOTT OF WELLINGTON HARBOUR, THUS STOPPING NORMAL RAIL/ROAD TRAFFIC BETWEEN NORTH ISLAND AND SOUTH ISLAND. THERE HAS BEEN A WIDE-SPREAD PATTERN OF STRIKES/GO-SLOWS IN NEW ZEALAND IN LAST FEW WEEKS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT'S SEVEN PERCENT WAGE ORDER FREEZE. BUT WELLINGTON WATERSIDERS' STRIKE IS AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER AS WAGES AND CONDITIONS OF WORK ARE NOT THE CAUSE. THE STRIKE IS PURELY POLITICAL AND EFFECTIVELY BLOCKS ALL COMMUNICATION EXCEPT BY AIR BETWEEN THE MAIN TWO LAND MASSES OF NEW ZEALAND.

5. WITH PRIME MINISTER AND GOVERNMENT OUT OF TWO OVER WEEKEND, THERE WERE SERIES OF MEETINGS BETWEEN HANDFUL OF CABINET MINISTERS AND LABOUR REPRESENTATIVES WHICH SO FAR HAVE COME TO NOTHING. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT GOVERNMENT MAY BE PREPARED TO GET REALLY TOUGH WITH OFFENDING UNIONS. DE-REGISTRATION OF UNIONS OR IMPOSITION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY TO GET THE FERRIES OPERATING AGAIN
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ARE POSSIBILITIES. WITH THOUSANDS OF PASSENGERS AND CARS STRANDED ON BOTH SIDES OF COOK STRAITS PUBLIC OPINION IS PROBABLY READY TO SUPPORT TOUGH ACTION.

6. FURTHER REPORT WILL FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.
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